

**PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO VALIDATE THE NAME "FAVUS" LANCHESTER, 1900 (CLASS CRUSTACEA, ORDER DECAPODA) (PROPOSED CORRECTION OF AN ERROR IN "OPINION" 73)**

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The object of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its plenary powers for the purpose of validating the name *Favus* Lanchester, 1900 (Class Crustacea, Order Decapoda) an invalid name inadvertently placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* in the Commission's *Opinion* 73 (1922, *Smithson. misc. Coll.* **73** (No. 1): 27). The error involved was detected in the course of preparations for the publication of the first instalment of the *Official List* in book form. In view of the widespread demand for the early publication of the foregoing volume and the fact that publication cannot take place until a decision has been taken on this and certain other cases where errors have been detected, it is hoped that the International Commission will give all practicable priority to the consideration of the present application.

**2.** The name *Favus* Lanchester, 1900 (*Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* **1900** : 767) was published for a genus of which *Favus granulatus* Lanchester, 1900 (*Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* **1900** : 768) is the type species by monotypy. This name was included in a long list of the names of genera of Decapoda recommended to the International Commission in 1915 for inclusion in the *Official List* as names that were nomenclatorially available and taxonomically required. It was on this basis that it was placed on the *Official List* in the Commission's *Opinion* 73.

**3.** The routine checking of names placed on the *Official List* involves, *inter alia*, looking up each name in the latest *Nomenclator* (Neave's *Nomencl. zool.*) for the purpose of making as sure as possible that investigations carried out since the name in question was placed on the *Official List* have not brought to light the existence of an older homonym, thus rendering invalid the name placed on the *Official List*. In the present case this check brought to light the existence of the previously overlooked name *Favus* Schafheutel, 1850 (*Geogn. Unters. südbay. Alpengeb.* : 44), established for a genus of fossils.

**4.** The name *Favus* Lanchester, 1900, is consequently an invalid name, and it is necessary therefore to consider what action should be taken in view of the fact that (as explained above) this name is on the *Official List*. The first point that has to be examined is whether the name *Favus* Schafheutel, 1850 (the name which is responsible for invalidating *Favus* Lanchester, 1900) is a name in use in the group of fossils concerned, for, if this were found to be the case, the position would clearly be quite different from that which would arise if it were found that the name *Favus* Schafheutel was some old synonym that was not in use and the disappearance of which would cause no inconvenience whatever in the group concerned. It appears from inquiries made that not only is the name *Favus* Schafheutel not in use by palaeontologists but also

that the indication given by Schafheutel for this genus is so scanty that it cannot be stated with certainty to which of the major groups of the Animal Kingdom this genus should be referred. Neave (in his *Nomenclator* 2 : 401) gave only the indication “?Protozoa.”

5. It is quite clear therefore that, if the Commission were to decide to use its plenary powers to suppress the name *Favus* Schafheutel, 1850, for the purpose of validating the name *Favus* Lanchester, 1900, that action would not cause the slightest inconvenience to any palaeontologist, consisting (as it would) merely in the removal of an unwanted *nomen dubium*. On the other hand, it is through the action of the Commission itself that the name *Favus* Lanchester has for nearly thirty years been on the *Official List*, and for the whole of that period systematists have therefore been led to believe that it was an available name and the correct name to use for the genus concerned. The fact that a name has been on the *Official List* for so long a period would afford no ground for retaining it on the *List*, if it were to be found that to do so would involve the suppression of a name as commonly used, or more commonly used, in some other group. But this is not the position in the present instance, for the fact that the name *Favus* Lanchester is now seen to be invalid is due solely to the excavation from the literature of a name published a hundred years ago which is not only not in use but in addition applies to a nominal genus that was so badly characterised by its original author that it is not possible definitely to establish the position of the genus in the Animal Kingdom and in consequence the name is a *nomen dubium*. In the present case, therefore, no inconvenience of any kind would result from the suppression of the name *Favus* Schafheutel, 1850, while the interests of stability would certainly be promoted by this course, enabling, as it would, the name *Favus* Lanchester, 1900, to retain the position which it has for so long occupied on the *Official List*. The Congress has clearly indicated that names, once placed on the *Official List*, are not lightly to be removed therefrom (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 4 : 268, point (c)), and it appears that the present is a case where it would be in accordance with the spirit of the foregoing decision that the unwanted and unused name *Favus* Schafheutel, 1850, should be suppressed under the plenary powers, in order to permit the name *Favus* Lanchester, 1900, to retain the position which it has for so long occupied on the *Official List*.

6. It is accordingly recommended that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature should :—

- (1) use its plenary powers to suppress for the purposes both of the Law of Priority and of the Law of Homonymy the generic name *Favus* Schafheutel, 1850 ;
- (2) confirm the name *Favus* Lanchester, 1900 (gender : masculine) in its position on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* ;
- (3) place the name *Favus* Schafheutel, 1850, on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology* ;
- (4) place the trivial name *granulatus* Lanchester, 1900 (as published in the binominal combination *Favus granulatus*) (trivial name of type species of *Favus* Lanchester, 1900) on the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology*.